The University of Innsbruck was founded in 1669 and is one of Austria’s oldest universities. Today, with over 28,000 students and 5,000 staff, it is western Austria’s largest institution of higher education and research. For further information visit: wwwuibk.ac.at.
Content

- introduction to the context
  - framework Bologna process – consequences to curriculum development
  - focussing on recognition – what/who is central?
  - structures and procedures – new or refine?

- pilot project “the third way”
Does this picture fit?

What – who – is central?
Institutional recognition practice

- HEI’s should develop a standard integrated admission policy
- Take into consideration
- Differentiate between decision on
- Fair
- Non-discriminatory
- Outlining all steps of the procedure
- Appeal procedure
- Based on outcome
- LRC + subsidiary texts
- EAR-HEI manual
- Recognition
- Selection
Content

➢ introduction to the context
  o framework Bologna process – consequences to curriculum development
  o focussing on recognition – what/who is central?
  o structures and procedures – new or refine?

➢ pilot project “the third way”
Using the example of the bachelor's study program in pharmacy, quality-assured “RPL” (Recognition of Prior Learning) procedures and processes are to be implemented, which (in addition to formal learning outcomes) take non-formal and informal learning outcomes into account for

- access and
- exemption.

In addition, target group-appropriate information and data management tools are to be developed and implemented.

The entire (further) development will take place with the broad involvement of all target groups.
The pilot project „The Third Way“ recognises that...

- linear life models no longer fit diverse & heterogeneous society
- success, transfer and progression is central to „LLL“
- learning needs and learning environments are dynamic and changing
- equity of access & appreciation of learning outcomes contribute to societal wellbeeing

The pilot project...

- offers chances and benefit for learners and Higher Education Institutions
- contributes to the prosperous development of society
- lives & speaks the language of learning outcomes
- brings people/learner into focus

*based on Sheridan 2019, CIT*
Work packages (WP) „The Third Way“

WP 1: Management & Dissemination

WP 2: Procedures & Processes

WP 3: (Blanket) Recognition

new part of the statutes (study regulations): validation

WP 4: Training

WP 5: Information generation and processing of information
**WP 1: Management & Dissemination**

*Project management and project coordination* are responsible

- to achieve the *project goals*,
- for monitoring the project progress including *risk- and quality management*,
- for reporting and dissemination of the project results.

**Matrix project structure**

The matrix project structure means, that the *employees are always active in the main organization and function.*

**Advisory Council**

In *order to prevent* possible *conflicting* objectives, an advisory board is provided to the project

**Target Groups (TG)**

In the sense of a *participatory communication strategy*, target groups are involved at the *relevant points*.

**WP 1 Goals**

Organization (including meetings & events) and *implementation of the project* in compliance with the objectives, the budget and the time frame. *Dissemination* of the project results.

*project proposal 2019*
Valid procedures and processes for the recognition of non-formal and informal learning outcomes already exist.

Existing expertise is used to identify, modify and implement procedures and processes, which are able to meet national, institutional, technical and disciplinary (quality) requirements.

→ Based on this, a new constituent part of the statutes (validation) must be created, discussed and approved (with and through the senate)

Taking into account the matrix structure and organization of the project WP 2 is initiated “top-down”, but the implementation will work “bottom-up” (participative strategy).

WP 2 Goals
Identification, modification, implementation and evaluation of suitable procedures and processes

PDCA cycle
Towards the end of the project, the implemented procedures and processes will be analyzed for their applicability and, if necessary, further developed.
Together with specific target groups

- learning outcomes
- qualifications or job profiles (e.g. NQF)

are examined, which are suitable for recognition / crediting in terms of their descriptions.

focusing on non-formal learning outcomes (as a first step)

**WP 3 Goals**

Identification, analysis and description (information preparation) for recognition and recognition of suitable learning outcomes.

Development of requirements and criteria catalogs and corresponding forms.

**PDCA cycle**

The procedures and processes implemented in the operations of the pilot study program are reviewed and, if the legal framework is successful, released for university-wide implementation.

The project results will probably make it necessary to revise curricula.
WP 4: Training

In the course of at least one peer learning activity (involving external (inter-) national expertise) it is initially clarified

• which requirements the implementation of the “Third Way” special target groups entails
• which training courses are necessary for which group of people.

WP 4 Goals
Identification of the requirements for (scientific and general) personnel and training needs
start training

PDCA cycle
Additional competencies are built up for administrative and academic staff. It will be checked, to what extent these are relevant for the existing job-descriptions (salary).
WP 5: Information generation and processing of information

The literature shows, that an essential factor for a successful implementation of the “Third Way” will be the preparation and distribution of information appropriate for the target groups.

As part of WP 5, information is prepared and made available for specific target groups. (homepage - FAQ, social media, handouts, forms, database, etc.).

WP 5 Goals

Reduction of (unfounded) resentments (awareness of the topic)
Adequate processing of information for target groups

PDCA cycle

The implementation of a self-assessment tool for learners/potential students will follow the project.
Facts & Figures France

- **Full diploma**: 4300
- **Part of diploma**: 2400

**Age of candidates**
- < 30: 6.4%
- 30-39: 36.8%
- 40-49: 39.7%
- > 50: 17.1%

**Employment situation**
- Job seeker: 14.2%
- Unemployed: 0.6%
- Employed: 85.2%

**Managers among employed**: 45%

Source: Statistical Data 2011, Ministry of Higher Education & Research, France

Source: Country Experience France, ERPL network meeting 10/2013, S. Bonichon, Expert de Bologne
Thank you for your attention!

Contact:

Bernhard Fügenschuh
Vice-Rector for Student Affairs and Teaching:
Lehre-Studierende@uibk.ac.at

Christina Raab
National Expert European Higher Education,
Aurora European University Office:
Christina.Raab@uibk.ac.at
Sources and references


Raab, Chr. (2019): Antrag Pilotprojekt “The Third Way”, Pilotprojekt zur Anerkennung außerhochschulischer Lernergebnisse für die Zulassung zum Studium und während des Studiums (Recognition of Prior Learning – RPL), Innsbruck (German only, unpublished)

Sheridan, I. (2019): RPL in Cork Institute of Technology (CIT), presentation (unpublished) contact: Irene.Sheridan@cit.ie


Collection of further sources
Explanation of substantial differences
The concept of substantial differences is one of the key features of the Lisbon Recognition Convention and is described as follows: “Foreign qualifications shall be recognised unless there is a substantial difference between the foreign qualification for which recognition is sought and the corresponding qualification of the host country”. By focusing on the five key elements that together make up a qualification (level, workload, quality, profile and learning outcomes) and by taking substantial differences into account, competent recognition authorities have transformed their approach from expecting foreign qualifications to be almost exactly the same as those offered in their own countries, to focusing on “Recognition” by accepting nonsubstantial differences.

Definition of substantial differences
Substantial differences are differences between the foreign qualification and the national qualification that are so significant, that they would most likely prevent the applicant from succeeding in the desired activity such as further study, research activities or employment.
The burden of proof of a substantial difference lies with the competent recognition authority of the host country and the accompanying guidelines are as follows:
not every difference should be considered to be “substantial”;
the existence of a substantial difference entails no obligation to deny recognition to the foreign qualification;
the difference should be substantial in relation to the function of the qualification and the purpose for which recognition is sought.

Interpretation of substantial differences
Differences in attitudes to recognition and to the interpretation of substantial differences persist. The ENIC and NARIC Networks promote flexible attitudes and to move away from rigid and legalistic interpretations.
The interpretation of substantial differences is very much linked to the overall outcome of a qualification, programme and/or programme components, since this determines whether the applicant has been prepared sufficiently for the desired activity. A difference that is only related to input criteria (such as workload and structure of the programme) is not likely to have a direct effect on the abilities of the applicant, and should therefore not be considered automatically as a substantial difference.
Council recommendation on validation of non-formal and informal learning (keypoints)

✓ arrangements are linked to National Qualification Framework/European Qualification Framework

✓ information and guidance is to be provided

✓ validation of non-formal and informal learning is easily accessible

✓ transparent quality assurance supports the process

✓ validation professionals are offered relevant training

✓ qualifications acquired via non-formal or informal learning outcomes meet the (formal) standards

✓ tools (e.g. ECTS-Credits) are in synergy with validation process

Council 2012, recommendation on validation
Validation means a process of confirmation by an authorised body that an individual has acquired learning outcomes measured against a relevant standard and consists of the following distinct phases:

- IDENTIFICATION through dialogue of particular experiences of an individual
- DOCUMENTATION to make visible the individual’s experiences
- a formal ASSESSMENT of these experiences and
- CERTIFICATION of the results of the assessment which may lead to a partial or full qualification

recognition of prior learning means the validation of learning outcomes, whether from formal education or non-formal or informal learning, acquired before requesting validation.